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ABSTRACT

An assessment of the educational status of children and youth attending Cleveland (Ohio) public schools was conducted through analysis of recent trends in the district and a comparison of the performance of students in the Cleveland schools with that of students in other large urban districts, Atlanta (Georgia), Boston (Massachusetts), and San Francisco (California). Goals for educational reform established in Cleveland in its Vision 21 plan were closely aligned with the national urban education goals and the six national education goals defined in 1990. These goals provided the framework for the evaluation of the status of Cleveland school children. Comparing them with students in the other three urban districts made it apparent that Cleveland students fared below average on five of six national education goals and were evidently performing considerably below the national average. Knowing that Cleveland students lag in achievement, attendance, and graduation rates is not enough to bring about improvement. More specific data on how instruction is being conducted at present is required in order to design changes that will promote student outcomes that indicate competence and mastery. (Contains 13 tables and 15 references.) (SLD)

Using National Education Goals to Assess Cleveland Public School Performance

by

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Background

An assessment of the educational status of children and youth attending the Cleveland Public Schools (CPS) is offered in this paper. Through analysis of recent trends in the district and a comparison of the performance of students attending CPS with that of students in other large urban districts—specifically three school districts of similar size, i.e. Atlanta, Boston, and San Francisco—we attempt an assessment of student performance taking into account the specific challenges and demographics of the Cleveland Public School District and its student demographics. At the same time, we will discuss factors commonly missed in assessments of student performance.

Since the early eighties, attention has increasingly focused on public elementary and secondary education. In *A Nation At Risk* (1983), the National Commission on Excellence in Education voiced the concern of many business leaders, politicians, and local, state, and federal government officials about the mediocre outcomes of elementary and secondary education. The National Governors' Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the Department of Education, the National Assessment of Educational Progress Project, and the National Center for Educational Statistics responded to the assessments made in *A Nation At Risk* (1983) with diagnoses of student performance and policy recommendations. In 1991, eight years after *A Nation At Risk* (1983) was published, the federal government countered with *America 2000*, an education strategy to achieve six national education goals*

The reports produced in the eighties and early nineties had several features in common: they focused on student performance to assess the quality of education; they centered on educational excellence and educating the top students while ignoring educationally disadvantaged students; and they established strong connections between positive educational outcomes, the productivity of the work force, and our ability to compete in a global economy. In contrast, studies of at-risk students focused on their poverty, minority membership or limited English proficiency to account for their limited success in school (Stevens, 1993a). While *A Nation At Risk* and *America 2000* focus on outcomes' studies of students-at risk focus on inputs and circumstances surrounding the students' lives.

* This report was researched and written before the U.S. Congress added two goals (professional development for teachers and parental involvement) to the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 3/21/94.

Attention to the demanding challenges of students in urban schools came, in the late eighties, from the Council of Great City Schools (CGCS) made up of 44 of the nation's largest urban public school systems. The Council summarized the challenges faced by large city schools:

> In the nation's largest urban areas, every problem is more pronounced, every solution harder to implement. From teacher shortages to drug abuse, from dilapidated buildings to dropouts, urban schools, their leaders and teachers face challenges each day that would overwhelm any organization, public or private. The obstacles to learning—poverty, limited-English proficiency, family instability, discrimination, disability, malnutrition, and poor health—demand comprehensive and intensive solutions, developed in a context of enormous political, demographic, economic and social diversity and scarce resources (1992, p. vii).

The first steps the CGCS took to address these challenges was to set goals for urban education and, following the trend toward more accountability of school districts, to assess progress towards those goals.

In Cleveland, concern about the educational status of our youth led the mayor of Cleveland, the chairman of the Education Committee of the Greater Cleveland Roundtable, the chairman of The Cleveland Initiative for Education, the president of the Cleveland School Board, and the superintendent of the Cleveland Public Schools to convene a Summit on Education to map out a ten-year strategy to improve the quality of education in Cleveland in 1991. In 1993 the superintendent of the Cleveland Public Schools unveiled a comprehensive education plan called Vision 21 to restructure and revitalize the district's schools. The goals put forth by the Cleveland Summit on Education, which guided the reform plan, are closely aligned with the national urban education goals as well as with the six national education goals. Table 1 presents the relationship between the three sets of goals.

Table 1

Relationship Between National, Urban, and Cleveland Summit Education Goals

National Goals	Urban Goals[1]	Cleveland Summit Goals[2]
Readiness to learn	Readiness to learn	Early childhood development
High school completion	Increased graduation rates	- - - -
Student achievement and citizenship Science and mathematics achievement	Improved academic achievement	Child-focused, locally managed schools that will include parents, public and private entities, neighborhood community agencies, and school employees to increase academic achievement.
- - - -	Quality teachers	- - - -
Adult literacy and lifelong learning	Postsecondary opportunities	- - - -
Safe disciplined, and drug-free schools	Safe and caring environment	In-school coordinated social services
- - - -	- - - -	Parental/guardian involvement
- - - -	- - - -	Schools as neighborhood resources
- - - -	- - - -	Communications (with stakeholders so they understand the operations of the schools).

[1]The urban educational goals and the national educational goals are taken from *National Urban Education Goals: Baseline Indicators, 1990-91* by the Council of Great City Schools (1992)

[2] The goals of the Cleveland Summit on Education are taken from *Today's Young People are Tomorrow's Cleveland* by the Cleveland Summit on Education (1991).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOALS

The commonalities between the goals set by the National Educational Goals Panel, the Council of Great City Schools, and the Cleveland Summit are apparent. First, conventional views of education as a kindergarten to 12th grade (K-12) process are expanded to include readiness to learn and early childhood education as target goals. Second, concern about the skills acquired by students in schools led to establishing improved academic achievement as another common goal. Third, the realization that education cannot occur in drug-infested, unsafe schools resulted in a concentration on creating safe, disciplined places.

Although the three sets of goals have a common thrust, differences in emphasis are noticeable. We can also safely infer that the absence of some goals does not imply disregard for them. For instance, high school completion and increased graduation rates are goals at the national and urban level, but have not been explicitly listed for the Cleveland Summit. These specific goals were probably seen as resulting from other goals which were given prime consideration. In other cases, such as a goal of quality teachers, listed at the urban level but not at the Cleveland level, it is safe to assume that it was considered a precondition to the achievement of other priority goals. Adult literacy, lifelong learning, and postsecondary opportunities, goals at the national and urban level, are absent from the Cleveland goals because the focus of the Summit was the improvement of the Cleveland Public Schools. Finally, four out of the six Cleveland goals were targeted to increasing parental and community involvement. The attention devoted to this area points to a significant difference between Cleveland urban, and national goals. Family and community involvement were high priority goals for the Cleveland Summit.

The year 2000 has been set as a deadline to achieve these goals. As a result, assessment of student outcomes has become a high priority at the national and urban level. Accordingly, the National Education Goals Panel has made recommendations to improve and enhance existing outcome data and assessment systems (National Education Goals Panel, 1992[?]). These outcome data indicate student achievement but ignore factors that contribute to those educational outcomes.

Before comparing the educational outcomes of Cleveland Public School students with those of students in other urban districts it is necessary to note that what actually happened in the

classrooms of these school districts is unknown and therefore we lack an important piece of information about the students' "opportunity to learn," a concept that has received considerable attention in studies of differences in student outcome data across nations (Stevens, 1993a). To know whether students have had the opportunity to learn, we need to know if they were given the opportunity to learn, i.e., have had a curriculum consisting of subjects tested, have had access to quality instructional delivery, and have been assessed with a valid, reliable, and fair system (Stevens, 1993a). While the Second International Mathematics Study, sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), the first and second International Educational Assessment of Progress (IEAP), and the Study of Reading Literacy (also sponsored by IEA) have done extensive studies on opportunity to learn, no similar study has been undertaken in the United States, nor has an attempt been made to use opportunity to learn to understand the limited success of poor, minority children. In a national survey of 91 directors of school district research departments, Stevens (1993b) found that none did studies of opportunity to learn.

In the analysis that follows, we need to bear in mind that the absence of data on opportunity to learn raises questions about the interpretation of student outcome data. While these data tell us whether a student has mastered a concept or a skill, they conceal information about the curriculum adopted for the district, the content the student was actually exposed to, the quality of instruction received, and the validity and reliability of the test.

Educating the Cleveland Child

District Characteristics

Characteristics of the school district provide a partial context to interpret educational outcomes. Below are some salient characteristics of the district:

- The current superintendent was hired in 1992.
- One hundred and twenty-nine schools comprise the Cleveland Public School District.
- Per pupil expenditure in Cleveland for fiscal year 1991 was $6,363.55 (Council of Great City Schools, 1992).

Cleveland is among those districts with new superintendents who are characterized by efforts to improve the quality of its schools. With 129 schools, Cleveland is slightly above the median for size of school districts in CGCS, but below the mean for large urban districts since CGCS includes very large districts such as Los Angeles, New York and Chicago.

In 1990-91, per pupil expenditure in the Cleveland Public Schools was higher than the average for large urban schools ($5,200) and for suburban schools ($6,073) (Council of Great City Schools, 1992). When compared with three school districts of similar size, Cleveland's per pupil expenditure was higher than San Francisco's ($4,676) and Atlanta's ($6,174), but lower than Boston's ($6,939) (Council of Great City Schools, 1992). Table 2 indicates trends in per pupil expenditures and the sharing of local, state, and federal sources of revenue.

As shown in Table 2, the levels of both local and federal contributions have decreased since 1981, the local funding by 10 percentage points and the federal funding by 5 percentage points. During the same period, the state level increased by 15 percentage points.

Urban Demographics

Changes in the urban population (migrations, changing racial and ethnic composition), the impact of the economic recession on Cleveland's families and the school system, and the increasing number of students with special needs (such as limited-English proficiency or disability) create new challenges for the Cleveland Public Schools.

Between 1980 and 1990 the population of the city of Cleveland decreased from 573,822 to 505,616 inhabitants. Furthermore, more school-age persons left Cleveland than moved to it between 1985 and 1990. Approximately 15,600 moved out, but only 3,500 moved in (NODIS, 1993). The 14.9 percent decrease in enrollment that the Cleveland Public Schools saw between 1980 and 1990 (Council of Great City Schools, 1992) was due in large part to families moving out of the city.

The increased number of students enrolling in private schools also contributed to the decline in enrollment in Cleveland Public Schools. According to 1980 census data, 76 percent of school-aged children attended public schools, 20 percent attended private schools, and 4 percent were not enrolled in school. By 1990, a smaller percentage (70%) of Cleveland's youth 5-18 years of age attended public schools, the same percentage as in 1980 attended private schools, and a larger percentage (10%) were not enrolled in school. (NODIS, 1993).

Table 2

Expenditures Per Pupil and Sources of Revenues:
Cleveland Public Schools,
Selected Years from 1981 to 1992

	Total Revenue/ Pupil	Local %	State %	Federal %
1981	$ 3,057.71	49.5	36.0	14.5
1985	4,901.24	43.5	49.5	7.0
1991	6,363.55	39.4	52.0	8.6
1992	6,173.35	39.6	51.0	9.4

Source: Cleveland Public Schools, Research and Analysis Department, 1993

Approximately two-thirds of the students attending Cleveland Public Schools prior to the remedial desegregation order of 1978 were assigned to schools in which 90 percent or more were of one race (Cleveland Public Schools, 1991). In the fall of 1990, after 12 years of implementing desegregation measures, only 14 schools remained outside the parameters established by the Court requiring that the student bodies at the schools reflect district-wide racial composition within ± 15 percentage points (Cleveland Public Schools, 1991).

In 1990-91, 68.9 percent of the CPS students were "African American," 6.2 percent were "Hispanic," 1.4 percent were "Asian or Pacific Islander," and 0.2 percent were "American Indian." Racial and ethnic composition, the socioeconomic status, and the percentage of students who are English-language proficient have changed for the students enrolled in the Cleveland Public Schools. The trends in racial/ethnic characteristics of CPS students are shown in Table 3.

Table 3 shows that the percentage of African-American students in Cleveland Public Schools increased 11.7 percentage points in the period between 1975-76 and 1991-92 while the percentage of white students decreased 16.4 percentage points in the same period. The percentage of Hispanic students increased 3.6 percentage points in the same period, and the percentage of Asian students increased by 1 percentage point. The percentage of American Indian students has remained constant at 0.2 percent of the student enrollment in 1991-1992 (Cleveland Public Schools, 1992).

The CPS enrollment trends reflect not only the changing demographics of the city but the ethnic and racial distribution of students attending public and private schools. Although the percentage of school-age youth attending public schools has decreased in the last decade, the percentage of minority of youth attending these schools has increased. According to the 1990 census data, 40 percent of the white school-age population in Cleveland attend private schools, up from 35 percent in 1980. Six percent of African-American students attend private schools, a decrease of 2 percentage points since 1980. Fourteen percent of Hispanic youth attend private schools, a 9 percentage point decrease since 1980 (NODIS, 1993).

As in other large cities across the country the decline in industry has had severe effects on Cleveland residents and on the Cleveland Public Schools, resulting in a smaller tax base and a reduced percentage of local revenues per pupil. The poverty rate index for students in the

Table 3

Racial/Ethnic Characteristics of Pupils
in the Cleveland Public Schools
School Years: 1975-76 Through 1991-92

Year	American Indian N	%	Asian N	%	Hispanic N	%	Black N	%	White N	%	Total N	%
1975-76	335	0.3	357	0.3	3,691	2.9	73,706	57.5	50,065	39.1	128,706	100.0
1976-77	479	0.4	377	0.3	3,670	3.0	71,797	58.5	46,383	37.8	122,706	100.0
1977-78	453	0.4	385	0.3	3,463	3.1	68,085	59.9	41,258	36.3	113,644	100.0
1978-79	422	0.4	405	0.4	3,511	3.4	65,738	63.4	33,551	32.4	103,627	100.0
1979-80	301	0.3	435	0.5	3,172	3.5	58,963	64.3	28,829	31.4	91,700	100.0
1980-81	263	0.3	495	0.6	2,951	3.7	53,987	67.4	22,378	28.0	80,074	100.0
1981-82	245	0.3	608	0.8	3,239	4.0	54,642	68.1	21,477	26.8	80,211[1]	100.0
1982-83	242	0.3	659	0.8	3,329	4.2	54,577	68.5	20,871	26.2	79,678[2]	100.0
1983-84	199	0.3	702	0.9	3,128	4.1	52,087	68.7	19,715	26.0	75,835[3]	100.0
1984-85	188	0.2	703	0.9	3,185	4.3	51,290	69.0	19,004	25.6	74,370	100.0
1985-86	172	0.2	902	1.2	3,273	4.4	51,199	69.5	18,153	24.6	73,697	100.0
1986-87	172	0.2	775	1.1	3,402	5.6	51,050	69.7	17,863	24.4	73,263	100.0
1987-88	162	0.2	811	1.1	3,519	4.9	50,823	70.0	17,863	24.4	72,639	100.0
1988-89	143	0.2	816	1.1	3,777	5.2	50,408	69.9	16,968	23.5	72,116	100.0
1989-90	173	0.2	932	1.3	4,041	5.7	48,311	68.3	17,303	24.5	70,760	100.0
1990-91	162	0.2	979	1.3	4,438	6.3	49,746	71.1	14,688	21.0	70,019	100.0
1991-92	163	0.2	920	1.3	4,638	6.5	49,747	69.2	16,371	22.7	71,839	100.0

Notes: [1]The State adjusted figure used for 1981 SF-2 was 77,706.

[2]From 1982-83 OCCD-1 figures used in Civil Rights Survey.

[3]Data are from District ADM-1 reports for first full week in October, with the two preceding exceptions. Grand totals do not always equal the exact total of race breakdowns for that year, due to rounding.

Source: Cleveland Public Schools: Research and Analysis Department (1993).

Cleveland Public Schools, which peaked in 1984-85 at 76.1 percent, has since decreased to 71.4 percent in 1991-92 (Cleveland Public Schools, 1993). The likelihood of what Schorr (1988) calls "rotten outcomes"—bad health, malnutrition, not having a decent place to live, school failure, and violent crime—is higher for children who have significantly less income than the norm and who do not have access to the social, educational, and health services that would shield them from the repercussions of these circumstances. All children and youth face challenges, but poverty compounds the risks of growing up.

With those limited resources, the Cleveland Public Schools has to address the needs created by the changing demographics of its student population. Forty-three percent of the school-age persons in the city of Cleveland live in families with a mother only, and 5 percent in families with a father only (NODIS, 1993). As the number of adults in households with children decreases, the possibility of obtaining support from family members or neighbors decreases as well, given that more women have entered the labor force. To address the day care needs of its students' families, the Cleveland Schools has added programs for latchkey children. Another trend that the Cleveland Public Schools have to address is the increasing number of births to teenagers. In 1990, 3,159 babies were born to teenage mothers in Cuyahoga County (BCDI). That same year, 822 babies were born to teenagers just in the 15 to 17 age range in the city of Cleveland (Cleveland Department of Public Health, 1991 [?]). Recognizing the new needs created by this trend, the CPS created programs for teens and child care for infants of teen mothers.

Another challenge faced by Cleveland Public Schools is the number of students who show limited-English proficiency. In 1990-91, 1.6 percent of CPS students were classified as limited-English proficient with twenty languages being spoken in the Cleveland schools. Since 1980-81, the number of students attending the bilingual program has increased with some fluctuations. In 1980-81, 2,746 students were enrolled in bilingual programs; in 1984-85—3,583; in 1990-91—2,979 and in 1991-92—3,127 (Cleveland Public Schools, 1992).

Finally the increasing number of students with a wide range of disabilities attending the Cleveland Public Schools (those who are "multihandicapped, deaf-blind, hearing handicapped, visually handicapped, speech handicapped, orthopedically handicapped, severe behavior handicapped, developmentally handicapped and learning disabled") (Cleveland Public Schools,

1992) requires additional programs. Table 4 presents the distribution of students categorized by disability for 1990-1991 and 1991-92.

As indicated in Table 4, the total number of handicapped students increased from 1990-91 to 1991-92. In 1990-91 disabled students represented 13.07 percent of the total enrollment, increasing in 1991-92 to 14.7 percent of total enrollment. The three largest categories of handicapped students in 1991-92 were learning disabled (28 percent), speech handicapped (26.1 percent), and developmentally handicapped (25.2 percent).

Attainment of Educational Goals

As discussed above, the national (America 2000), urban (CGCS), and Cleveland Summit educational goals are very similar, although a few goals of the Cleveland Summit are unique. Baseline indicators are used here for 1990-91 to compare the Cleveland Summit goals to the national urban goals.

National Urban Goals

Goal 1. Readiness to Learn

By the year 2000, all urban children will start school ready to learn (Council of the Great City Schools, 1992).

Readiness to learn has been assessed by the CGCS by evaluating the availability and the quality of the preschool programs; the extent to which students are assessed for their readiness for kindergarten; and the provision of full-day kindergarten for as large a number of children as possible. In addition, services to support readiness to learn for students who are in school (programs for latchkey children, schools with programs for teen mothers, etc.) have been assessed as well.

Based on national evidence that early intervention programs for low income urban children have beneficial effects, urban districts have increased access to full-day comprehensive programs to urban children below 5 years of age, improved the quality of pre-kindergarten (pre-K) and kindergarten staff, extended child care services, and added parent education programs.

Table 4

Number of Handicapped Children by Disability: Cleveland Public Schools, 1990-1991 and 1991-1992 School Years

Type of Disability	Number of Students 6-21 Years	
	1990-91	1991-92
Multihandicapped	185	253
Deaf-Blind	0	0
Hearing Handicapped	147	150
Visually Handicapped	92	91
Speech Handicapped	2,454	2,758
Orthopedically Handicapped	302	208
Other Health Impaired	0	118
Severe Behavior Handicapped	812	976
Developmentally Handicapped	2,467	2,661
Learning Disabled	2,699	2,953
Total	9,158	10,558

Source: Cleveland Public Schools, Research and Analysis Department, 1993.

Of all incoming first graders in Great City School districts in 1990-91, 53.1 percent had attended full-day kindergarten the year before, and an additional 33 percent had attended a half-day program. In terms of the percentage of students attending full-day kindergarten in 1990-91, Cleveland (45%) ranks below the average for Great City Schools (53.1%) (Council of Great City Schools, 1992). Table 5 shows that districts of similar size show considerable variation.

In terms of measures of quality of preschool programs, such as teacher-to-student ratio in kindergarten and teacher certification, Cleveland is below average. The national trend reflects more preschool teachers are required to be certified as early childhood education specialists. However, only 48.3 percent of Cleveland's pre-kindergarten staff were credentialed as early childhood specialists, below the average for Great City Schools (52.4%).

Cleveland's percentage of kindergarten teachers who have elementary school credentials (90.1 %) is above the Great City Schools average (80.5%), but Cleveland's percentage of early childhood staff who have early childhood credentials (48.3%) is below the Great City Schools average (52.4%) (Council of Great City Schools, 1992). The ratio of 28 kindergarten students per teacher is high compared to Great City Schools where there was one teacher or professional for every children (22.1) (Council of Great City Schools, 1992). Table 5 shows a comparison of Cleveland to three other urban districts of similar size regarding the readiness-to-learn goal.

As Table 5 shows, Cleveland is making progress towards meeting the readiness to learn goal in at least two important areas: students are assessed to determine their readiness for kindergarten, and all students attend either half-day or full-day kindergarten.

The percentage of kindergarten teachers with elementary school credentials, however, falls below the mean for the three cities compared. Cleveland is comparable to San Francisco at a teacher-to-student ratio of 1: 28 for kindergarten; Atlanta and Boston, with approximately 21 students per teacher, have more favorable ratios. Cleveland has instituted several programs to support readiness to learn once the children are in school. However, Table 5 indicates that in the four comparison cities, these programs cover only some of the families in need of these services. Table 5 also shows that programs for latchkey children have not received much attention.

In brief, based on the indicators selected, CPS is below the national urban average in terms of preparing all urban children to start school ready to learn.

Table 5

Readiness to Learn: A Comparison of Cleveland to Atlanta, Boston and San Francisco, 1990-91 School Year

	Cleveland	Atlanta	Boston	San Francisco
Data collected to assess readiness for kindergarten	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Percent of entering 1st graders with:				
Full-day kindergarten	45%	81%	NA	0.0%
Half-day kindergarten	55%	0.0%	NA	100%
No prior schooling	NA	12.3%	NA	0.0%
Undetermined	0.0%	6.5%	NA	0.0%
Number of kindergarten pupils per teacher	28.2	21.2	21.6	28.8
Percent of pre-K staff with early childhood credential	48.3%	4.2%	NA	100%
Percent of K staff with elementary school credential	90.1%	98.1%	87.8%	100%
Schools with child care for infants of teen mothers	Some	Some	Some	Some
Schools with parenting programs for adults	Some	All	None	Some
Schools with parenting programs for teens	Some	Some	Some	All
Schools with programs for latchkey students	None	None	None	Some

SOURCE: The Council of the Great City Schools. (1992, September). *National Urban Education Goals: Baseline Indicators, 1990-91.* Washington, D.C. author.

Goal 2. Increased Graduation Rates

By the year 2000, urban schools will increase their graduation so they are at least comparable to the national average (Council of Great City Schools, 1992).

Progress towards increased graduation rates can be measured by comparing increases in the number of students who graduate from urban schools, reductions in the number of dropouts, and increases in daily student attendance rates.

The graduation rate is calculated as the number of students who graduate divided by the average daily membership of students in grades 7 through 12. Table 6 shows the trend in graduation rates for the Cleveland School District in the last decade.

As shown in Table 6, the graduation rate has remained relatively stable since 1980. Although it dropped over one percent between 1980 and 1981, it climbed to ten percent again by the late eighties. (Office on School Monitoring, 1991). No comparable data is available for districts of the CGCS. Graduates of the CGCS comprised 4 percent of the total enrollment in grades K-12 in CGCS, below the national average of 5.5 percent (Council of Great City Schools, 1992).

Dropout rates are related although different from graduation rates. The Cleveland School District uses the Ohio Department of Education definition of dropout: "Any pupil who withdraws from school for one of the following reasons:

- over 18 years of age;
- armed services;
- runaway and cannot be located by the school district;
- marriage or pregnancy and not enrolled in instruction for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards;
- institutional placement, when the institution does not have a program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards;
- adult education without verified enrollment; or
- expulsion, if not required to re-enroll (at least 18 years of age)" (Cleveland Public Schools, 1993).

Table 6

Graduates as a Percentage of Students: Cleveland Public Schools, Grades 7-12

School Year	Average Daily Membership, Grades 7-12	Number of Graduates	Graduation Rate (%)
1980-1981	37,334	3,998	10.7
1984-1985	33,553	2,998	8.9
1989-1990	27,776	2,788	10.0
1991-1992	29,135	3,199	10.98

Sources: Office on School Monitoring (1991, July). *Report Pursuant to Order of July 10, 1990 in Reed v. Rhodes*. Cleveland Public Schools, Research and Analysis Department.

Caution has to be exercised when comparing dropout rates because different methods of calculating the rate are used across the country. Given the available data it seems that the Cleveland Public Schools, along with other urban schools across the country have higher dropout rates than either suburban or rural schools (Council of Great City Schools, 1992). Table 7 shows the dropout rate trend for the Cleveland School District for selected years beginning in 1980-1981.

Table 7 shows that although the dropout rate has increased from 9.7 percent in 1980-81 to 11 percent in 1991-92, the increase has not been steady. The dropout rate was almost constant during the first part of the eighties, decreasing slightly in 1990-91 to 8 percent and then increasing by three percentage points to 11 percent, in 1991-1992.

While nationally the dropout rate of large urban areas has declined among white and African-American students over the last ten years (Council of Great City Schools, 1992), that has not been the case for Cleveland. In the Cleveland School District, the proportion of African-American dropouts has increased from 8.9 percent of all African-American students in 1981-82 to 9.6 percent in 1989-90. The proportion of African-American students who dropped out was lower than the proportion of "other"[1] students who dropped out during the same period. In 1981-82 , the dropout rate for other students was 13 percent and in 1989-90, it was 12.6 percent (Cleveland Public Schools, 1991). Cleveland Public Schools does not publish dropout information for Hispanic students specifically, so it is impossible to compare their rate with Hispanic students in other urban districts. Nationally, the dropout rate for Hispanics has remained high.

Cleveland's dropout rate for 1990-91 (80%) is lower than that of two districts of similar size—Atlanta (13%), and Boston (10.7%)—but higher than San Francisco (7.1%). Council of the Great City Schools, 1992).

Increased graduation rates are positively affected not only by reduced dropout rates, but by regular attendance as well. Cleveland's student attendance rate in 1992-1993 is 86.5 percent. The attendance rate in the elementary schools is 90 percent, but in the middle and high schools it

[1] The reports generated by CPS to comply with the desegregation order classify students into "African American" and "other".

Table 7

Dropout Trends Cleveland Public Schools, Selected School Years from 1980 to 1992

	Number of Dropouts N	Dropout Rate %
1980-81	3,621	9.7
1984-85	3,230	9.6
1990-91	2,316	8
1991-92	3,199	11

Note: The dropout rate has been calculated by dividing the number of students who have withdrawn by the number of students in grades 7 through 12 enrolled on July 1 and September 1, (or first day of school of any year) by the Average Daily Membership in those grades.

Source: Office on School Monitoring and Community Relations. (1991, July). *Report Pursuant to Order of July 10, 1990 in Reed v. Rhodes*. Cleveland Public Schools: Research and Analysis Department. (n.d.). *Cleveland City Schools' Dropout Rate for 1991-1992 School Year*. Cleveland Public Schools.

is about 77 percent (Thiess, 1993). Attendance rates in the district have been dropping; in 1960-1961, the attendance rate was 95 percent; in 1970-1971, it was 90.5 percent; and in 1980-81, 82.5 percent. Since 1981, the attendance rate has slowly climbed back up. Most of the weight for the decline lies in the senior high schools, where daily attendance has dropped from 83.2 percent in 1975-76 to 77 percent in 1992-1993 (Cleveland Public Schools, 1991; Thiess, 1993).

In brief, based on the indicators considered, Cleveland is below the national urban average, but above two of the districts of similar size in terms of increasing the number of students who graduate from high school.

Goal 3. Improved Academic Achievement

> *By the year 2000, schools and communities will demonstrate high expectations for all learners so that urban students will attain a level of achievement that will allow them to successfully compete with students nationally and internationally in our global community (Council of the Great City Schools, 1992).*

Comparison of achievement has to be viewed mindfully because school districts used different achievement tests. The most widely used achievement tests are the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), the Tests of Achievement and Proficiency (TAP), the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS), and the California Achievement Test (CAT). Given the available data, it appears that urban schools have been making progress in student achievement in reading and math, but still lag behind the national average. Similar patterns are evident in reading and math scores on the standardized norm-referenced tests used by the Great City Schools: in the 1990-91 school year, 40.4 percent of the students were above the 50th percentile in reading, and 39.4 percent were above that percentile in math (Council of the Great City Schools, 1992). In that same school year, 39.1 percent of students attending the Cleveland Public Schools scored above the 50th percentile in reading, below the average percentage for Great City Schools. At that time, 34 percent of CPS students scored above the 50th percentile in math, also below the average percentage for Great City School students (47.8%). The percentage of tenth graders

who successfully completed first year algebra (39.7%), however, surpasses the average percentage for GCS (36.1%).

Academic achievement in the Cleveland Public Schools can be measured by the outcomes of several tests: competency tests, achievement/ability tests, and proficiency tests. In Cleveland Public Schools, students take two competency tests—the Cleveland Reading Competency Test (CRCT) and the Cleveland Math Competency Test (CMCT); one achievement test—the California Achievement Test (CAT), a standardized norm test with sections on reading and mathematics; and state-mandated proficiency tests.

Competency Tests. The reading competency test is administered to all CPS students, and the mathematics competency test is administered to students in grades 3, 6, 7, 8 and 9. The criterion for attaining mastery of grade level objectives is 75 percent for reading and 67 percent for mathematics. Table 8 presents the mastery rates for 1991 and 1992.

Table 8 shows that students in the second and third grades are closer to attaining mastery of reading objectives than any other grades. Table 8 also shows a declining trend in reading for students in upper grades. Third grade students attained grade level mastery for math, but the performance of students who took the test in other grades was low.

Achievement/Ability Tests. The reading section of the CAT is given to CPS students in all grades. Table 9 compares spring of 1991 with spring of 1992 scores in reading vocabulary and reading comprehension, by grade, for Cleveland students.

As Table 9 indicates, reading performance from 1991 to 1992 improved in the eleventh grade only. Reading vocabulary increased slightly in the third, fifth and, to a larger degree, in the tenth and eleventh grades. Reading comprehension increased slightly in the second grade and, to a larger degree, in the eleventh grade. In 1991 and again in 1992, first grade students scored above the 50th percentile both in reading vocabulary and comprehension. A decline in reading performance across the grades can be observed both for reading vocabulary and reading comprehension, with the exception of the second, third, and eleventh grades. A comparison of the performance of African Americans with other students on the reading comprehension section of the CAT in 1990 found "Higher proportions of white students consistently scored at or above the 34th percentile rank than African American students at all grade levels." (Cleveland Public Schools, 1991).

Table 8

Mastery Rate in Competency Tests: Cleveland Public Schools 1991 and 1992

Grade	Reading (%)			Mathematics (%)		
	1992	1991	Difference	1992	1991	Difference
1	44	48	-4	NA	NA	
2	63	62	1	NA	NA	
3	60	61	-1	72	67	5
4	37	41	-4	NA	NA	
5	42	40	2	NA	NA	
6	39	48	-9	41	12 *	
7	32	34	-2		29	
8	30	41	-11	16		0
9	32	24	-8		16 *	

* The sixth grade Cleveland Math Competency Test (CMCT) was administered to seventh graders in Fall 1990; the eight grade CMCT was administered to ninth graders in Fall 1990.

Table 9

California (CAT) Mean NCE[1] Reading Scores: Cleveland School District, Spring 1991 and Spring 1992

Grade	Reading Vocabulary			Reading Comprehension		
	1992	1991	Difference	1992	1991	Difference
1	51.6	52.2	-.6	50.3	50.6	-.3
2	52.6	48.9	3.7	47.5	47.3	.2
3	50.6	50.4	.2	48.1	48.4	-.3
4	45.1	46.5	-1.4	44.0	45.7	-1.7
5	46.6	46.4	.2	45.7	46.2	-1.2
6	45.5	46.5	-1.0	46.1	48.6	-2.6
7	41.2	42.7	-1.5	40.8	42.8	-2.0
8	43.4	44.3	-.9	41.0	44.0	-3.0
9	41.9	43.4	-1.5	43.0	43.3	-.3
10	47.0	45.3	1.7	44.6	45.2	-.6
11	46.3	44.8	1.5	48.4	46.8	1.6
12	46.5	46.8	-.3	48.2	47.9	.3

Note: [1]NCE: National Curve Equivalent

Source: Cleveland Public Schools, Research and Analysis Department.

Mathematics performance showed large improvements in all grades except the eighth grade. It is significant that the eighth grade shows decreases in performance in both reading and math and only a slight improvement in language, just one year before students are required to take the Ohio proficiency test. Table 10 presents the scores of CPS students in computation and concepts and application for grades 3 through 10.

Overall performance in computation, concept, and application has improved with the exception of the seventh and eighth grades where computational skills declined significantly, and concept and application also dropped. An analysis of the 1989 outcomes of the Cleveland Math Competency Test (CMCT) shows that performance at the intermediate school level was low. Furthermore, a larger percentage of students other than African-American students were achieving mastery of grade-level math objectives in the seventh and ninth grades. In the seventh grade, 20 percent of African-American students and 35 percent of other students achieved mastery; in the ninth grade, 10 percent of African-American students and 16 percent of other students achieved mastery (Cleveland Public Schools, 1991).

Another indicator of improved academic achievement used by the Great City Schools is the percentage of tenth graders successfully completing first year algebra. In the 1990-91 school year, 36.1 percent of the Great City School students had completed first-year algebra by the end of the tenth grade.

State Proficiency Tests. Students in the state of Ohio are required to pass proficiency tests in four areas (reading, math, writing, and citizenship) in order to graduate from high school with a high school diploma. Those who do not pass all four tests will receive only a certificate of participation. This use of the Ohio proficiency tests has been a cause of concern for parents, school staff, and local representatives. In a speech at Mayor Michael White's Monday Forum on the Cleveland Schools, Ted Sanders, Ohio Superintendent of Public Instruction, indicated that proficiency tests are being used by the State as an indicator of the quality of the instruction being imparted by a school system (1993). Many have pointed out that the tests measure skills that have not been taught. Others counter that those are the skills that will be required to become a productive worker or an informed citizen. Regardless, at present, students who have not passed the proficiency tests cannot graduate with a high school diploma.

Table 10

CAT Mean NCE[1] Math Scores: Cleveland School District Spring 1991 and Spring 1992

Grade	Computation			Concepts/Application		
	1992	1991	Difference	1992	1991	Difference
3	48.5	47.0	1.5	48.8	48.1	.7
4	49.1	39.6	9.5	45.0	41.7	3.3
5	55.0	47.8	7.2	50.6	45.0	5.6
6	52.5	47.9	4.6	49.2	45.3	3.9
7	44.5	48.8	-4.3	43.3	44.2	-.9
8	39.9	43.2	-3.3	43.2	43.9	-.7
10	45.6	42.1	3.5	45.1	42.0	3.1

Note: [1]NCE: National Curve Equivalent

Source: Cleveland Public Schools, Research and Analysis Department.

Table 11 shows the number of students who had passed proficiency tests while they were ninth, tenth, and eleventh graders in 1992; less than 10 percent of the ninth graders passed all four tests. Less than half passed reading or writing, while mathematics appears to be the most difficult test for CPS students with 83.7 percent of the ninth graders needing to retake the exam.

Table 11 indicates that the number of students passing the test increases with each retake. However, in the eleventh grade still only one-third of the students had passed all four tests. Sixty percent of the students have yet to pass the mathematics tests after having taken it in the eleventh grade.

Math is the test for which there is the largest difference between African-American and non-African-American student performance. While 40 percent of non-African-American tenth graders have passed the math proficiency test, only 27 percent of African-Americans have done so (Cleveland Public Schools, 1992).

Cleveland students are not performing well in mathematics, but neither are students around the nation. Data from the 1991 National Education Goals Report show that fewer than one out of every five students has demonstrated competency in mathematics in grades 4, 8, and 12. The results should be interpreted bearing in mind that this is the first attempt to assess student competence in mathematics nationally (National Education Goals Report, 1992). While third graders perform relatively well in math, as they grow older their performance plummets. One explanation that is often cited for this declining performance is that only 15 percent of all fourth graders receive mathematics instruction from a teacher trained to teach mathematics. Another explanation is the commonly accepted notion, according to student and parent surveys, that high achievement in mathematics is not the result of consistent work but of having a talent for math (National Education Goals Report, 1992).

Table 11

Grade 9 Proficiency Test: Cleveland School District
Cumulative Results After Fall 1992 Test Administration

Grade	Total[1]	Pass All Four[2]		Need to Retake							
				Reading		Writing		Citizenship		Mathematics	
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
9	5,160	488	9.5	2,721	52.7	2,986	57.9	3,410	66.1	4,319	83.7
10	3,941	835	21.2	1,141	28.9	1,010	25.6	1,954	49.6	2,943	74.7
11	2,919	974	33.4	606	20.8	638	21.9	1,089	37.3	1,774	60.8

Notes: [1]Total: Number of students enrolled as of February 18, 1993. The total does not necessarily mean students had taken all four tests. Numbers do not include special education students and non-attendees.

[2]Percent Pass-All Tests: Estimated percent may be lower than the actual percent. The base is total enrollment. This is being corrected, so that the base will be the actual N tested.

Source: Cleveland Public Schools, Research and Analysis Department.

Goal 4. Quality Teachers

By the year 2000, urban schools will be adequately staffed with qualified teachers who are culturally and racially sensitive and who reflect the racial characteristics of their students (Council of Great City Schools, 1992).

In its baseline study of urban school districts the CGCS used the following indicators to assess quality of teachers: percentage of teachers who are fully certified in English, in mathematics and in science; percentage of teachers who are minority; average teacher salary; average class size; schools with future teacher programs; and schools with teacher or staff in-service training in urban culture or race relations. No data is available for Cleveland on the percentage of teachers certified in English, mathematics or in science. Teachers worked with average class sizes of 26 students; well above the GCS average of 1: 17.9. Forty-three percent of the teachers in CPS were minority. Although clearly the racial/ethnic characteristics of CPS teachers did not match that of their students, the ratio of minority teachers to minority students was higher than the average for Great City Schools which was 38.6 percent (Council of Great City Schools, 1992). Average salary for teachers in the CPS ($32,948) is very close to the average for urban schools ($33,015) in the Council. Cleveland has some schools with future teachers programs to encourage more minorities to go into teaching and all schools in the CPS have teacher or staff in-service training in urban culture or race relations.

Goal 5: Postsecondary Opportunities

By the year 2000, urban school graduates will be fully prepared to enter and successfully complete higher education, experience successful employment, and exercise their responsibilities as citizens (Council of Great City Schools, 1992).

The educational initiatives at the national, urban, and local level in the eighties and nineties have been geared to the preparation of high school graduates capable of performing as competent students in postsecondary educational institutions as well as productive workers in the labor force and informed citizens. In this section, Cleveland data is not compared with national

data because some urban school districts collected data on graduates' intended behavior rather than on actual behavior; consequently, results from many urban districts appear inflated for some postsecondary opportunities such as attending four- and two-year colleges. Table 12 shows the results of a survey of a sample of CPS graduates conducted in 1987 and 1990. The trend shown in Table 12 reflects the reduced number of opportunities for high school graduates to enter the workforce in "rustbelt" cities such as Cleveland, and, more generally, to become a part of the multinational economy.

As Table 12 indicates, the percentage of CPS graduates working either full- or part-time declined between 1987 and 1990, and the percentage of those who were no longer actively seeking work grew more than twofold. The percentage of CPS graduates seeking postsecondary education declined, but those seeking a career opportunity in the military increased. In 1990, the military attracted more than three times as many graduates as in 1987. Finally, the percentage of CPS graduates in public assistance declined about one percent.

Goal 6: Safe and Caring Environment

> *By the year 2000, urban schools will be free of drugs and alcohol, students will be nourished and healthy, and schools will be well-maintained and safe (Council of Great City Schools, 1992).*

To assess the extent to which urban schools are safe and caring environments, data was collected by the CGCS on the prevalence of drug and alcohol use and of disruptive behavior, as well as on the programs created by the districts to improve the health, self-confidence, and self-esteem of its students and reduce the prevalence of risky behaviors. Comparing all aspects of a safe and caring environment is not possible because several school districts did not collect data on some of the indicators.

Cleveland reported 0.5 drug and alcohol incidents per 1,000 students. Cleveland fares well when compared with the average for large urban district in which 2 drug or alcohol abuse-related

Table 12

Survey of Postsecondary Opportunities for Graduates: Class of 1986 and Class of 1989, One Year After Graduation

Post-Secondary Status	Class of '86 %	Class of '89 %
Employment Status		
Full-time	28.2	26.3
Part-time	26.5	24.8
Actively Seeking	38.3	30.8
Not Seeking	6.8	16.8
Two- or Four-Year College	40.8	35.0
In the Military	2.8	9.0
Public Assistance	16.9	15.8

Source: Cleveland Public Schools, Office of School Monitoring and Community Relations (1991, July). Report Pursuant to Order of July 10, 1990 in *Reed v. Rhodes*.

incidents per 1,000 9-12th graders, and 1.2 per 1,000 6-8th graders were reported (Council of Great City Schools, 1992).

Teachers' and principals' perceptions of whether CPS are safe, disciplined, and drug-free schools were obtained by means of a survey. Data were gathered on students' behavior and its effect on teaching, frequency of threats experienced by teachers, frequency of injuries experienced by teachers, and teachers' sense of safety. In all these areas CPS was below the national average; no similar data was available for urban schools alone (Cleveland Public Schools, 1992).

Slightly over half of the teachers identified disruptive behavior and misbehavior as interfering with teaching to a great extent. Thirty-five percent of the teachers and principals reported that they had been threatened by students; moreover, 17 percent reported physical attacks from students. Forty-five percent of the teachers in Cleveland felt safe in the school building during school hours. That percentage decreased to 29 percent after school hours, 25 percent on the school grounds and 17 percent in the school neighborhood (Cleveland Public Schools, 1992). Not surprisingly, the national average, which includes suburban school districts, for teacher responses about school environment is more positive. Thirty-three percent of high school teachers felt that student misbehavior disrupted their teaching; 15 percent felt unsafe in the school building after-school hours and 2 percent during school hours (National Education Goals Report, 1992). As mentioned, no comparable information is available for urban schools in the CGCS.

In an effort to provide a healthy environment, all CPS schools have drug education programs, as well as human immunodeficiency (HIV) and sexually transmitted diseases (STD) education programs. In addition, all CPS schools have nutrition education programs. Steps are being taken in other health areas such as programs for pregnancy prevention and for children of drug-addicted parents, but these programs are located only in a few schools. (See Table 13)

Unique Cleveland Summit Education Goals

Three goals of the Cleveland Summit for Education are intended to involve new stakeholders to ensure the academic success of CPS students:

Table 13

Indicators of a Safe and Caring Environment: Cleveland, Atlanta, Boston, and San Francisco School Districts, 1990-1991

Indicator	Cleveland	Atlanta	Boston	San Francisco
Drug/alcohol incidents per 1,000 students:	0.5	NA	NA	NA
Number of schools with health clinics:	1	63	2	2
Number of student visits to health clinics:	NA	NA	NA	NA
Schools with drug education programs:	All	All	All	All
Total amount of deferred maintenance (millions of dollars)	NA	NA	$3.5	$90.0
Schools with HIV and STD prevention programs	All	All	All	Some
Schools with nutrition education programs:		Some	All	All
Schools with programs for children of drug-addicted parents:	Some	None	None	Some
Schools with programs to reduce student suicide and stress:	None	All	All	Some
Schools with programs to reduce crime and gangs:	All	Some	Some	All
Schools with pregnancy prevention programs:	Some	Some	Some	Some
Schools with programs for homeless children:	All	None	None	Some

Note: NA = Not Available

Source: The Council of Great City Schools (1992, September). National Urban Education Goals: Baseline Indicators, 1990-1991

- Child-focused, locally managed schools that include parents, public and private entities, neighborhood community agencies, and school employees to increase academic achievement.
- Parental/guardian involvement
- Schools as neighborhood resources
- Communications (with stakeholders so they understand the operations of the schools).

All these goals are aimed at increasing family and community involvement in education.

CPS has been engaged in school-community relations since the late seventies. When Cleveland was put under a desegregation order, the district understood the need to have community support. A goal of the district in this regard has been:

> The district and each school shall conduct a coordinated, cost-effective, goal-oriented community relations program which continually informs the public of progress in implementing the Remedial Orders and Constitutional imperatives, provides for the timely resolution of parent complaints, and makes maximum feasible use of parent facilities and private sector resources (Cleveland Public School, 1991, p. V-10-3).

Two indicators of progress towards meeting this goal are: 1) the district has been able to respond to at least 95 percent of parent complaints within 96 hours, and 2) semi-annual reports are issued to inform the public about progress toward implementing the remedial orders (Cleveland Public School, 1991, p. V-10-3).

Another policy adopted by CPS after the court desegregation order was the creation of school community councils (SCCs). The SCCs advise the principal on various matters such as school budgeting and staffing, student achievement and discipline, instructional issues, school community relations and school improvement. At the conclusion of the 1989-90 school year, ten of the 127 schools did not have functioning SCCs and the reported level of participation of the SCCs varied greatly across schools (Cleveland Public School, 1991, p. V-10-3). A study conducted in 1990 by Leadership Development Associates found that the magnitude and scope of the SCCs did not focus "on the basic concerns and issues that parents want and need to have addressed." They concluded the "SCC needs to focus solely on student well-being and academic success." (p.71)

Four high schools in the district remain open in the evenings as community resources. Students and parents participate in sports, recreational, and educational activities.

How Cleveland Children Compare to Children in the Rest of the Nation

By comparing Cleveland school children with children in other large urban districts we found that they fare below average for five out of the six national urban goals. Furthermore, we know that urban districts lag behind suburban and rural districts in terms of achievement, attendance, and graduation. Consequently, we conclude that Cleveland school children are performing considerably below the national average. However, knowing that achievement, attendance, and graduation rates are not satisfactory is not the same as knowing how to address these issues.

Vision 21, developed by work teams comprising the major stakeholders in the education process, is a comprehensive action plan designed to improve the quality of instruction in the Cleveland Public Schools. The plan addresses urban children's opportunity to learn and includes three components:

- a comprehensive core addressing the educational foundation for all students by outlining steps required to "raise the floor;"
- enhancements to the comprehensive core, designed primarily to provide equitable learning opportunities for African-American students but benefitting all students by going beyond the core requirements; and
- quality choices, providing a[n] improved magnet school program and a new system of community choices (Cleveland Public Schools, 1993).

Accountability measured in terms of student outcomes is a paramount concern in the Cleveland Public Schools to assess progress made toward the new goals. Given that opportunity to learn is at the heart of what is being changed, however, it is crucial to heed Stevens' (1993) recommendation to investigate the nature of the opportunity to learn provided to Cleveland Public School students.

The national urban goals and the new Cleveland action plan are aimed at improving the educational status of Cleveland children. To do that we need more specific data on how instruction is being conducted at present. Only when we know and can assess what curriculum

students have studied, the time students have spent learning various concepts and skills, and the quality of instruction will we be able to design changes in school practices to promote student outcomes that indicate competency and mastery.

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